

Raptors

Raptors include eagles, hawks, owls, and falcons. All raptors in NC are federally protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The NCWRC takes reports of [bald eagle](#) and [peregrine falcon](#) nests. Contact the wildlife helpline at (866) 318-2401 or wildlifehelpline@ncwildlife.org to report any nests. If possible, please take a picture of the nest for verification.

The federal government manages the [National Eagle Repository](#) which stores and distributes dead golden and bald eagles, feathers, and parts to Native American tribes for religious and cultural uses. Any dead bald eagles need to be reported to a local district biologist or wildlife enforcement officer.

What is the common damage caused by raptors? The most common raptor damage is preying on free-ranging poultry. Occasionally, they will take small dog breeds and outdoor cats.

Can a WCA write a depredation permit? A federal permit must first be obtained to remove raptors. The USDA Wildlife Services facilitates the procurement of federal depredation permits through the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Atlanta, Georgia. Once the federal permit is received, a WCA can write the required state depredation permit.

Can raptors be relocated? No, under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act it is illegal to take, possess, import, export, transport, sell, purchase, barter, or offer for sale, purchase, or barter, any migratory bird without a federal permit.

What can I do with sick or injured raptors? There are licensed wildlife [rehabilitators](#) across the state that can take in sick or injured birds. Advise the individual to leave the bird alone for 24 hours before contacting a rehabilitator to see if the bird can recover on its own.

Are there any safety concerns? Raptors have powerful talons and beaks, so caution should be taken while handling. Thick leather gloves are recommended for handling birds of prey.

Non-lethal Options:

- See the first pages of this document for general ways to prevent conflicts with wildlife.
- It is important to supervise small breed dogs or cats when they are outside. Raptors can see small animals as prey but will maintain distance if a human is present.
- Harassment
 - If a raptor is frequently perching in an area, loud noises or spraying them with water can be effective at deterring them from the area.
- Exclusion
 - Many predation problems can be alleviated by having poultry go into a predator proof coop at night.
 - Placing two layers of netting, chicken wire, or hardware cloth 6-12 inches apart over a poultry run will ensure a raptor does not have access to the birds.

Lethal Options:

- Federal permit is always required.
 - The USDA Wildlife Services facilitates the procurement of federal depredation permits through the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Atlanta, Georgia.

- Active nests (nests with eggs or nestlings) are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and cannot be removed without a federal permit.
- In addition to the federal permit, a state depredation permit is always required to take raptors.

Red-Tailed Hawk



Photo: Lee Karney/USFWS

Bald Eagle



Photo: Mark Buckler

Peregrine Falcon



Photo: Jennifer Rowe